

The Wallowa-Whitman National Forest invites your input on a proposal to mitigated fish entrapment on the Lostine River.

Location

The Lostine Falls Fish Entrapment Mitigation project is located upstream from the Pole Bridge recreation site, approximately eight miles south of Lostine, Oregon.

Purpose and Need

The Lostine Falls Entrapment Mitigation project is intended to reduce the mortality of bull trout and Chinook salmon at Lostine Falls. Lostine falls is a natural cascade. Chinook salmon and bull trout can be funneled into a pocket pool while attempting to navigate the falls while migrating to spawning areas upriver. There are two boulders at the top of the falls that funnel salmon and trout into the pocket pool. The pocket pool dries out as flows lower during the late spring/early summer. Nez Perce Tribe fisheries research personnel documented seven adult spring Chinook salmon and 13 adult bull trout mortalities in 2017. Both bull trout and spring Chinook salmon in the Lostine River are listed as threatened species under the Endangered Species Act.

Proposed Action

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is proposing to move the boulders at the head of the falls that divert fish into the pocket pool. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife will use a tool called a boulder buster to break the boulders into smaller pieces that can be more easily repositioned. The boulder buster uses a hydraulic shockwave initiated by a shotgun cartridge blank to break large rocks into smaller ones. All equipment needed for the project would be carried in. The project would occur during low flow conditions. Other than moving the two boulders, no other modifications to the falls would occur. The work window for implementing the project is from September 15 to November 15, 2020.

The preferred comment submission platform is via our webpage. Submit electronic comments on the project webpage: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=57710> by selecting the “Comment on Project” link in the “Get Connected” group at the right hand side of the project webpage. Put the project name in the subject line; attachments may be in the following formats: plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), Word (.doc, .docx), or portable document format (.pdf).

Please share your input regarding this proposal by contacting Andrea Holmquist at 541-426-5533, andrea.holmquist@usda.gov, and P.O. Box 905, Joseph, OR 97846. If you would like any additional information about the project, please contact Alan Miller, Project Team Leader, at alan.miller@usda.gov, and Wallowa Mountains Office, P.O. Box 905, Joseph, OR 97846. Please provide input by April 8, 2020. Thank you for your interest in this project.